



## The Royal Society of Western Australia

### Medal Recipients

1924-1993

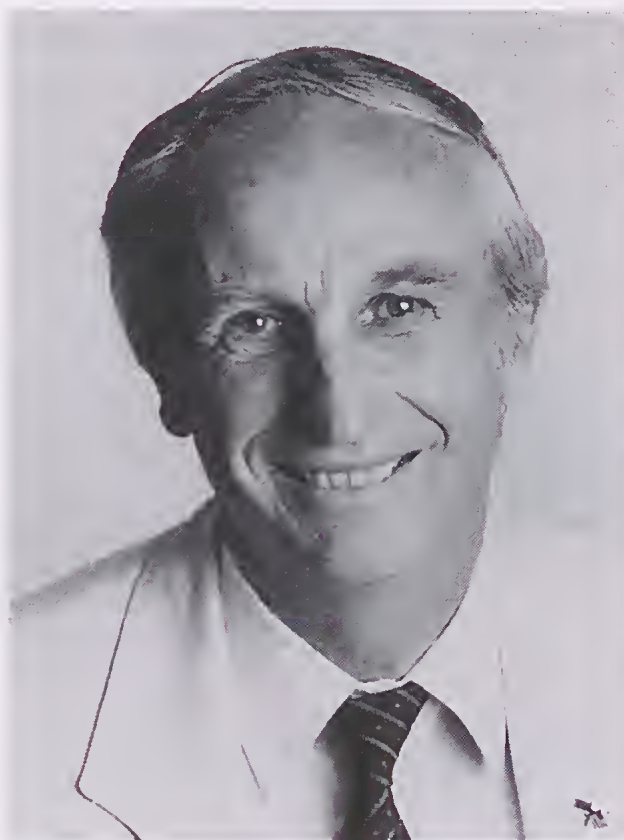


The Medal of the Royal Society of Western Australia was instituted in 1924 to mark the centenary of the birth of Lord Kelvin (26 June, 1824). The Royal Society Medal (originally referred to as the "Gold Medal" and then subsequently sometimes as the "Kelvin Medal" due to the association of the inaugural award with the centennial Kelvin celebration and because the medal bears in relief on its obverse side the head of Kelvin) is awarded approximately every four years for distinguished work in science connected with Western Australia. The original dye for the medal, first struck in 1924, remains in the safe-keeping of the Society. The first three medals were struck in gold, and all subsequent medals in silver. The first medallist of the Royal Society was Dr William J. Hancock, Government Electrical Engineer and Honorary Medical Radiographer at Perth Hospital, who in 1924 was the recipient of the Medal of the Royal Society of Western Australia, in recognition of his pioneering work in the medical application of X-rays. The most recent medallist, Professor John R. de Laeter, was presented with the seventeenth Medal of the Royal Society of Western Australia, in recognition of his contributions to geophysics and geochronology.

Recipients of the Royal Society Medal of Western Australia are:  
(reference to Journal of the Royal Society notice of medal award in parentheses)

- 1924 Dr W J Hancock: radiography; medical application of X-rays (10:xvii)
- 1929 Dr E S Simpson: mineralogy and geology of Western Australia (15:iv)
- 1933 Mr W M Carne: plant pathology; the bitter pit of apples (19:xi)
- 1937 Mr A Gibb Maitland: geology; Pilbara survey and artesian water supplies (23:xi)
- 1941 Prof E de C Clarke: geology of Western Australia (27:v)
- 1945 Mr L Glauert: natural sciences (31:vi)
- 1949 Mr C A Gardner: botany; the flora of Western Australia (35:v)
- 1955 Dr H W Bennetts: veterinary science; live stock diseases (40:1)
- 1959 Prof E J Underwood: animal nutrition and husbandry (43:67)
- 1966 Mr C F H Jenkins: agricultural entomology and natural history (49:91)
- 1970 Prof R T Prider: geology; petrology and mineralogy (53:95)
- 1979 Prof R M Berndt: anthropology; aboriginal studies (63:29)
- 1979 Emer Prof B J Grieve: botany; ecophysiology and the flora of WA (63:29)
- 1979 Dr D L Serventy: zoology; ornithology and nature conservation (63:29)
- 1983 Dr J S Beard: botany; vegetation classification and mapping (65:93)
- 1986 Prof C A Parker: soil biology
- 1993 Prof J R De Laeter: geophysics and geochronology (77:4)

## The Royal Society of Western Australia Medallist, 1993.



John de Laeter, AO CitWA, BSc(Hons), BEd(Hons), PhD, DSc(WA), FTS, CPhys, FInstP, Hon FAIP, Professor of Physics, Deputy Vice-Chancellor, and Dean of Graduate Studies, Curtin University of Technology.

The Medallist for 1993, Professor John de Laeter, AO Cit WA, BSc(Hons), BEd(Hons), PhD, DSc(West Aust), FTS, CPhys, FInstP, Hon FAIP, Professor of Physics, Deputy Vice-Chancellor of Research and Development and Dean of Graduate Studies at Curtin University of Technology, was elected by the Council of the Royal Society of Western Australia because of his contributions to the scientific knowledge of the geophysics of Western Australia. The Medal was presented at the Inaugural Royal Society of Western Australia Medal Lecture by His Excellency the Governor of Western Australia, Major General Michael Jeffrey, AO MC, Vice-Patron of the Royal Society of Western Australia, on Monday 8 November, 1993.

Professor John R. de Laeter was born at South Perth in 1933, and educated at Perth Modern School and The University of Western Australia from which he holds First Class Honours degrees in Physics and Education, and Doctorates in Philosophy and Science. He is a Fellow of the Australian Academy of Technological Sciences and Engineering, and the Australian and British Institutes of Physics. He is presently a member of the Board of CSIRO, the Higher Education Council, the Research Training and Careers Committee, and the Institutional Grants Committee of the Australian Research Council. He has held visiting research appointments at McMaster University in Canada, the Australian National University, Pennsylvania State

University, Cambridge University, and the Central Bureau of Nuclear Measurements in Belgium. He is past chairman of the Commission of Atomic Weights and Isotope Abundances, and is a member of the Council of the Inorganic Chemistry Division of the International Union of Pure and Applied Chemistry.

His major research interest is the application of mass spectrometry to a range of astrophysical, chemical, geological and nuclear problems. He has played a major role in the development of geochronology in Western Australia, in analysing Western Australian meteorites, in radioactive waste containment studies, and in the accurate determination of the isotopic abundances of numerous elements, many of which led to new values of their atomic weights. He has a long-standing interest in nuclear astrophysics and the origin of the chemical elements. He is also recognised as a science educator, with a particular concern for ensuring that the public is informed of the role of science and technology in society. He was one of the key persons involved in the concept of the Scitech Discovery Centre in Perth, and presently serves as Deputy Chairman of the Board. His other major concern has been to improve the relationship between Universities, Government and industry, and was instrumental in the establishment of Technology Park, adjacent to Curtin University, where he serves as Chairman of the Advisory Board.

Professor de Laeter received the ANZAAS Medal in 1992.